NEW ADDRESS: Rt. 7, Frederick, Md. 21701:::301/473-8186

2/28/68

Mr. Thomas Dougherty, Asst Gen. Counsel
Metromedia, Inc.
5151 Wisconsin Ave.,
Washington, D.C. 16

Dear Mr. Dougherty,

Your letter of January 25, to which I responded January 29, reached me as I was about to leave on a trip. The accumulation during my absence and an accident to my wife on my return delayed my listening to the few excerpts from the tape of Josiah Thompson's appearance on WCBM until this morning.

Few and inadequate as these excerpts are, they do confirm what your listeners told me at the time of that broadcast.

Very few people can or have taken the time to master this enormously complicated subject of the Kennedy assassination. I mean nothing offensive in saying there is no doubt you have listeners who know the fact and understand them better than your employees. What may seem like an ordinary statement of fact to you, particularly if it is spoken quietly and with mild words, may, in reality, be a deliberate lie. There are examples in the excerpts you sent me. These relate to both the evidence and to me and my work. If you want, I'll give you the examples and the proof.

If you were, as your employment, if nothing else, precludes, familiar with the writing in the field, you would know that the greatest piece of thievery is Thompson's. Most of his literary lightfingering was of my work. To sight a simple example, wherever he says "according to a document just discovered in the National Archives", which he then quotes, misquotes or reprints, what he is really saying is "according to the work of Harold Weisberg, published and copyrighted by him." The number of times this happens precludes any possibility of accident. Consistent with this are outright lies about the Zapruder film, the versions and generations of versions available to him, the Commission and others, what is in the film. It is the grossest kind of misrepresentation which is either deliberate, for a purpose or purposes, or the consequence of massive ignorance.

As I said, those who come to your stations and are presented by you are presented in good faith. But with any complex subject, the communicator cannot begin to have the grasp of the subject the author does and you cannot help becoming his tool if this is his intent.

Those excerpts of the show you sent me without any question establish that Thompson appears as the defender of the government, particularly the investigative services and the staff lawyers. Whether he is an agent, as many familiar with the subject, have come to believe, may be a question. There is no doubt that in his appearances he acts in this manner.

Whether he is paid for it is not material. What he does is. What he has done on your station was the subject matter of my initial letter to your Baltimore manager, answered by you. What he there did is to defend the government in this matter and lie about me and my work, and this is unquestionable from the very brief excerpts you sent me.

I recognize that particularly because you are a lawyer you may find this language blunt. If there is any doubt in your mind about the accuracy of what I tell you, I am prepared to give you the proof ~~that~~ of his thievery in visual form. I will give you photocopies of the pages of his book on which he lifts my copyrighted work and of the pages of mine that were lifted. I can do the same with his false claim to have been the discoverer of the original of an important picture, which the listener correctly identified as the fruit of my own labor of a year, and of his further lie in saying that it is "quite apparent that the FBI and the Commission staff saw the picture in the uncropped form". If you made a dub of the tape you sent me, the counter here reads 203. Now, as a lawyer, I presume you will understand the significance of the Commission never having the original negative, which is what I dug up (from AP-he says UPI), not having a single uncorrupted print of it in the files or evidence, not having any of the requisite evidence of the camera, the film, the point from which the picture was taken, the characteristics of the lens (it was a long lens, but you will not find this in the Report) in short, of having nothing but corrupted and deceptive and incomplete copies of a picture showing the President when he had just been shot. What is "quite apparent" to anyone with even a rudimentary knowledge of the evidence, is that neither the FBI nor the Commission staff ever had any uncorrupted copy, never had the negative, and deliberately handled evidence in this manner, which, without cross examination or opposing counsel, they could get away with. I think no honorable lawyer will say he wants his law and practise followed this way, or that this is the way he wants the murder of his President investigated.

So, if you find this language harsh, if you feel it at all unjust, you have my permission to send a copy to Thompson or his publisher. See if they sue-or even ask to confront me on it.

Now, if you deny me the opportunity to respond to the deliberate misrepresentation of evidence in the murder of the President and to the mistatements of fact about me, I shall not take it to the FCC. I will not contest it further. I think, in defense of the integrity of Metromedia and its presentation of what is offered as fact to its audience, you should. I am quite willing to restrict my presentation to the playing of excerpts of the tape of his show and the appropriate, factual answer, with citations in every case. If you are as familiar with my appearances on Metromedia alone as I believe you may be, you know I mean this seriously and will, in fact, have precise citations, ~~and that~~, unlike Thompson who in the excerpts you sent me, evades and gently slides off onto something else rather than respond.

Whether or not you do this, I again request the entire tape. It was not possible for whoever took the greater time, to audition it and give me but parts, to know what parts are pertinent and what are not. No one in your employ has that knowledge of the subject matter. I am among the very few who do, and in some areas, am the only one who does. I want it for a number of reasons, including as an historic record, for there is no doubt in my mind of Thompson's function, whether self-determined or of official character. I want it also because I am interested in seeing if his thievery is only in print. And, Frankly, because of his function, I want every word he utters on this subject so I can study them. I do hope you will send it to me at your earliest convenience. And I think in so doing you will be preserving Metromedia's integrity on a subject of vital national interest on which your record is better than most.

Sincerely yours,

Harold Weisberg